

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CPR-03 NSC-05 PA-01 SS-15 ICA-11
IO-13 PM-05 SP-02 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 AID-05
EB-08 AGRE-00 COME-00 TRSE-00 FRB-03 XMB-02
OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 /107 W
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P R 172029Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5333
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTO DOMINGO 3877

EO 11652 GDS
TAGS: PINT, PPDC, DR
SUB: AMBASSADOR MEETS WITH PRESIDENT-ELECT GUZMAN

REF: STATE 178232,

1. ON JULY 15, AMBASSADOR MET WITH ANTONIO GUZMAN TO DELIVER PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTER CITED REFTEL. MEETING ARRANGED EVENING BEFORE AT FRENCH EMBASSY RECEPTION WHERE AMB BRIEFED GUZMAN ON CONTENTS OF MESSAGE.
 2. AFTER READING PRESIDENT'S LETTER, GUZMAN EXPRESSED PLEASURE WITH ITS CONTENT AND ITS CORDIAL TONE. HE SAID HE PLANS TO RELEASE TEXT OF LETTER IN TUESDAY MORNING (JULY 18) PRESS. HE REMARKED PARTICULARLY ON THE USEFULNESS OF SUCH EXPRESSIONS OF SUPPORT AT THIS TIME.
 3. NOTING THE PROBLEMS THAT WILL FACE HIM WHEN HE TAKES POWER, GUZMAN SAID HE IS AWAITING IN PARTICULAR TO SEE HOW PRESIDENT BALAGUER CARRIES OUT HIS PROMISES OF COOPERATION DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD, WHICH WERE REITERATED IN THE PRESIDENT'S TELEVISION ADDRESS EVENING OF JULY 13.
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SO FAR, GUZMAN ADDED RECENT ACTIONS BY THE BALAGUER GOVERNMENT HAD CREATED ONLY PROBLEMS FOR THE FUTURE: A RECENT INCREASE OF 1,300 EMPLOYEES ON THE PAYROLL OF THE FINANCIALLY-STRAPPED NATIONAL ELECTRIC COMPANY (COMPANIA DOMINICANA DE ELECTRICIDAD); RECENT SALARY INCREASES FOR THE ARMED FORCES, THE POLICE AND THE NATION'S TEACHERS; AND CONTINUING TALK ABOUT A NEW "MILITARY ORGANIC LAW" WHICH

BALAGUER COULD RUSH THROUGH A LAME-DUCK CONGRESS AND WHICH COULD TIE GUZMAN'S HANDS IN MAKING CHANGES AT SENIOR LEVELS OF THE ARMED FORCES. GUZMAN ALSO MENTIONED THE PROBLEM OF AN OPPOSITION-CONTROLLED NEW SENATE, ARBITRARILY DECREED BY THE JCE, BUT HE AGREED WITH THE AMBASSADOR THAT THE UNITY OF THE REMAINS OF THE REFORMISTA PARTY, AFTER BALAGUER LEAVES OFFICE, WOULD BE OPEN TO SERIOUS QUESTION. IT WAS ONE MORE IRRITATION, HOWEVER.

4. GUZMAN'S REMARKS WERE MADE QUIETLY, AND MATTER -OF-FACTLY. AMBASSADOR REMINDED HIM OF THE STEADFAST POSITION MAINTAINED BY THE US IN SUPPORT OF AN UNIMPEDED UNFOLDING OF THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS. GUZMAN SAID HE APPRECIATED THIS AND HAD NO INTENTION OF SEEKING US INVOLVEMENT IN THE INTERNAL PROCESS NOW GOING ON. PRESIDENT-ELECT AGREED THAT THE POSTURE ON BOTH SIDES HAD BEEN CORRECT AND HE LOOKED FORWARD TO MAINTAINING CURRENT CHANNELS OF CONTACT.

5. GUZMAN WAS WORRIED AT THE ADDED BURDEN CREATED FOR THE COUNTRY BY THE SUGAR PROBLEM AND BY THE AFRICAN SWINE FEVER SWEEPING THE COUNTRY. HE HOPED THAT HE COULD APPROACH PRESIDENT CARTER FOR SOME KIND OF TEMPORARY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT FOR THE DR ON SUGAR IN ORDER TO MEET THE TOWER ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WHICH WILL FACE HIM. AMBASSADOR EXPLAINED SOME OF THE DIFFICULTIES IN THIS, TALKED ABOUT FOREIGN MINISTER JIMENEZ' APPROACH TO THE SECRETARY AND USEC NEWSOM AND USG CONFIDENTIAL

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EXPECTATIONS FOR THE ISA AND FOR DEALING WITH PRESENT US LEVIES, AND MENTIONED THE PROSPECTS FOR AN ADDITIONAL ISA QUOTA.

6. COMMENT GUZMAN'S MENTION OF AN APPROACH TO THE USG ON SUGAR SEEMED TO BE A SPUR-OF-THE-MOMENT FEELER-BUT IT WAS CLEAR THAT HE ENVISIONED APPROACHING THE US FOR ECONOMIC UNDERSTANDING AND CONCRETE MEASURES OF SUPPORT VERY EARLY IN HIS ADMINISTRATION. IN ADDITION TO SUGAR RELIEF, HE MENTIONED IN PARTICULAR PL-480 HELP.

7. HIS REMARKS ON THE SWINE FEVER OUTBREAK HAD TO DO MAINLY WITH ITS DEVASTATING EFFECT ON THE SMALL PEASANT OWNER. FOR MANY LITTLE PEOPLE IN THE COUNTRY SIDE, HE SAID, THEIR SOW IS THE MARGIN OF SECURITY THAT MAKES SOME SEMBLANCE OF NORMAL LIFE POSSIBLE. HE COULD NOT YET PREDICT HOW THIS PROBLEM WOULD BE MET BUT HERE AGAIN THE BUDGETARY ASPECT WOULD BE CRITICAL FOR HIM.

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